

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-31 are pending. Claims 1-9, 11-14, 16, and 17 have been amended for clarity and new claims 18-31 have been added to provide an additional measure of protection for the invention. In addition, the specification has been revised to correct grammatical and other minor errors.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested for the following reasons.

In the Office Action, the Examiner issued a rejection under 35 USC § 112, first paragraph, on grounds that the specification contains unclear phrases and various typographical errors. Applicant respectfully submits that a rejection on these grounds is properly issued as an objection rather than a rejection under § 112, first paragraph. Nevertheless, the specification has been revised for clarification purposes, and to specifically correct the two typographical errors on page 5 of the specification identified by the Examiner.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-17 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, for containing unclear phrases, identified on pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action. The claims have been amended to clarify all of these phrases. For example, as amended, claim 1 recites control apparatus which includes a duplexing control unit which maintains a message transmission function and disables a message receiving function of an active node and activates a message receiving function of a standby node during a duplex exchange operation. The control unit also transfers an active right signal to the standby node when the duplex exchange operation is completed. These features are clearly supported by the specification. (See, e.g., pages 8-11).

Dependent claims 2-9 have been amended to comport with the changes to claim 1, and to clarify additional features of the invention separately recited therein. These changes are also supported by the specification.

Claim 11, as amended, recites a control method comprising generating an exchange start signal for at least one of an active node and a standby node when a duplex exchange operation is to be performed, performing preparation for exchange between the active node and the standby node, respectively, when the exchange start signal is generated, generating an exchange complete signal and setting the active node to an inactive state when the preparation for exchange is completed at the active node, and activating the standby node when the exchange complete signal is received by the standby node. These features are clearly supported by the specification. (See, e.g., pages 12-16).

Dependent claims 11-14, 16, and 17 have been amended to comport with the changes to claim 11, and to clarify additional features of the invention separately recited therein. These changes are also supported by the specification.

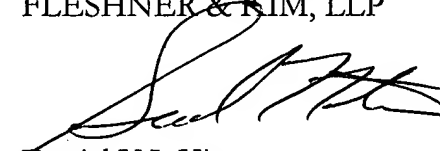
It is respectfully submitted that the foregoing amendments are sufficient to overcome the § 112, second paragraph, rejection.

New claims 18-31 have been added to provide an additional measure of protection for the invention.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney, **Samuel W. Ntiros**, at the telephone number listed below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,  
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